THE

Weekly Comedy:

OR, THE

Humours of a *Coffee-House.*

Dramatis Perſonæ.

Levy, *a Recruiting Officer.*
Hazard, *a Gameſter.*
Bite, *a Sharper.*
Nice, *a Beau.*
Blunt, *a Plain-Dealer.*
Whim, *a Projector.*

Venture, *a Merchant.*
Talley, *a Stock-Jobber.*
Querpo, *a Quack.*
Trick, *a Lawyer.*
Grim, *an Aſtrologer.*
Froth, *a Punſter.*

Double, *a Time-ſerver.*
Bays, *a Poet.*
Log, *a Mariner.*
Harlem, *a News-writer.*
Guzzle, *a Hard Drinker.*
Bohee, *the Coffee-man.*

Note, Theſe Perſons are introduc'd only as occaſion ſerves.

From **Wednesday** September the 3d, to **Wednesday** September the 10th, 1707.

Enter Venture *and* Harlem.

Venture. I Am glad I have met with you ſo Luckily, for I want a little of your Management in a particular Affair that relates to our Advantage.

Harlem. I am yours, Sir, upon all Occaſions.

Venture. As ſoon as I have drank a Diſh we'll go take a Bottle, and then I'll Communicate.

Harlem. Very well, Sir, —— but I'll tell you, —— laſt Week when we were talking on the behalf of the Governour of *New-England*, who ſhould ſit by at the next Table, but one of the Saints that came over with the Charge againſt him, and he's ſo highly Affronted at your Character of his Countrymen, and is ſo very Angry, that he ſays you deſerve to be taken *Coram Nobis.*

Venture. I wiſh he was here now, and I ſhould tell him how they remov'd their *Effects*, ſet Fire to their *Ware-Houſes*, and Burnt their *Books*, to even their Accounts with *Old England.*

Harlem. Were they ſuch *Sanctify'd R——s* as to commit ſuch a piece of *Villany?*

Venture. Aye, and worſe too; —— one of the Saints had the Impudence to tell me, after they had almoſt undone me, *That if they did not Ruin a Merchant once a Year they would grow too big for 'em.*

Harlem. Is it poſſible ſuch pretenders to *Righteouſneſs* could be guilty of a ſaying ſo *Barbarous* and *Ingrateful?*

Venture. They are ſuch *Scoundrels* in their Natures, that when they had wreſted the Authority out of the Hands of Sir *Edmund Andros*, juſt upon the *Revolution*, I have ſeen a Governour of their own chuſing, help Load his *Hay-Cart* with his own Hands, and when empty Riding in it, with his Back towards the Horſes, like a *Newgate-Bird* going to Execution. A Thouſand of theſe things could I tell you had I time. —— But, come, let's be going, for I want to talk with you privately.

Harlem } *Exeunt.*
Venture }

Enter Blunt, Trick, *and* Guzzle.

Guzzle. Here, give me a Diſh of your *Mahometan Rotgut.*

Blunt. How can you rail at a Liquor in the very Words that you call for it, and publickly Drink it, tho' you openly Abuſe it?

Trick. Mr. *Guzzle*, I find, is juſt like Doctor *Mumbletext*, that Reverend Dictator to a *Conventicle* in our Pariſh, who is always raving againſt *Covetouſneſs* as one of the worſt *Vices* of the *Whore of Babylon*, yet lends out his Money to the Neceſſitous Members of his own Congregation at Unlawful Intereſt, which muſt be punctually paid at the time appointed, upon Pain of *Excommunication*; if not, they are delivered to *Satan* to be Buffetted.

Guzzle. It is a common *Policy* in our Reverend Inſtructors, to rail againſt that *Vice* they are moſt addicted to, for that's the only way to be leaſt ſuſpected of it; ſometimes, in Sober Company, I my ſelf ſpit as much Venom againſt *Claret* as any Body, yet I can no more forbear it, than they can thoſe *Tranſitory Pleaſures* they ſo much exclaim againſt.

Blunt. Fie, fie, Gentlemen; the Failings of our Guides are improper Subjects for our *Coffee-Houſe Tittle-Tattle.* Since it is their Duty to endeavour to Reform us from our *Sinful Follies*, we ought, in *Gratitude*, to think it our Duty to wink at their Errors. Conſider, they are Fleſh and Blood as well as other *Hog-Puddings.* Therefore, if we will not follow their Doctrine, let's be as careful how we improve their Failings into a Jeſt, as how we make 'em our Example.

Trick. A Pox of your *Hypocritical Advice.* How does every Young *Maiden-look'd Domine Caſſock* when he has haſp'd himſelf into his little Elevated *Wooden Sanctuary*, Bandy about us Poor *Lawyers*, under the Nick-Name of *Scribes*; and make us ſuch a parcel of *Catterpillars*, as if our *Flouriſhing Fraternity* were one of the Plagues of *Ægypt* ——

Guzzle. If not of *Ægypt*, I am ſure you are of *England.* Tho' as for the Generality of Practicers in this Town I will allow 'em to be Men of ſome *Honour* and *Conſcience*; but as for your Country *Hawking-Bag Cormorants*, tho *Market-keeping Incendiaries*, I think the are a far greater Peſtilence than ev *Ægypt* was acquainted with.

Blunt. I think they are like the re of Mankind, for the whole World, in this Corrupt Age, is ſo full of *Avarice* and *Deceit*, that *Diogenes*, were he living, might burn a great many Candles into the Socket of his Lanthorn, before he would find what he ſearch'd for in *Athens* at Noon-Day:

Trick.

Trick. Honeſty is all a Jeſt; and he that pretends to the moſt, only wears it in his Looks and his Habit. Could you but ſee thro' the *Querpo Band* and *Sanctify'd Grimace*; the *Fur Gown*, and *Affected Gravity*; the *Sacerdotal Robe*, and the *Religious Vizard*, and you would find them all Infected with the ſame *Leproſie*, which, with *Shaking Noddles*, *Lift up Hands*, and *Demure Countenances*, they ſeem ſo highly to abominate in others. Therefore, why ſhould we *Lawyers* be accounted greater *Knaves* than other People?

Guzzle. Only becauſe he that deals with you generally finds you ſo; for he that is got up to the Neck in Troubled Waters, and calls to a *Lawyer* to help him out, ſhall be only lifted up like a full Bucket out of a Well, ſo empty'd, and let down again; but when once he finds, like a Bottomleſs Bucket, you have run all out, then, like the uſeleſs Veſſel, you may be Kick'd about till you are broken to pieces, e'er your *Lawyer* will defend you from being a *Foot-Ball* to your Adverſaries.

Blunt. I think your Simile will extend to all Degrees of Men as well as *Lawyers*, for Mankind by Nature are at Wars one with another; and pretended *Friendſhip* is but diſſembl'd *Peace*, Grounded upon mutual *Intereſt*, which I take to be the chief Reaſon why ſo few Men care to aſſiſt any in *Adverſity*, unleſs they are ſure of a Reward equivolent to their Service, ſo that themſelves may have a Benefit by the ſame Good they adminiſter to others; and by that means be the better able to defend themſelves againſt the Common Enemy, that is the whole *Common-Wealth*, at whoſe Mercy every Single Perſon lies, be he never ſo *Great*, or never ſo *Honeſt*. But as the fear of Puniſhment deters Men from Worrying one another by open *Rage* and *Violence*, ſo this Natural War amongſt Human Race, is *Malicioufly* carry'd on by *Treachery*, *Calumny*, *Fraud*, *Perjury*, and all other *Villanies* and *Vices*, by which Mankind endeavour to raiſe their own Fortunes, and to deſtroy others; ſo that if any thing brings a greater Scandal than ordinary upon the Profeſſors of the *Law*, it is their being the *Mercenary Inſtruments* of one Man's Revenge to Compleat the Ruin of another.

Trick. Pray why are we more *Mercenary* than other People? Were you Naked and Hungry, would a *Taylor* Cloath you, or a *Cook* Feed you without being Paid for't? Were you Sick and Penitent, would a *Phyſician* Viſit you, or a *Prieſt* Pray by you, without Money? Will not every Man be Paid for the Buſineſs he diſpatches? And every Tradeſman Sell his Commodities as dear as he can to the Purchaſer? Why then ſhould *Lawyers* be look'd upon to be Men of ſuch large Conſciences, for only requiring, like Perſons of other Employments, to be well Paid for what they do, and ſatisfy'd for their Attendance?

Guzzle. What a Buſtle's here about *Honeſty*, as if any Body was ſo ſilly in this *Money-Loving Age*, to think it a profitable *Vertue* worth contending for? If you have a mind to find that *Contemptible Chimera* you have ſo long been talking of, meet me half an Hour hence at the *Three-Tuns* in *Eaſtcheap*, and I'll ſhow you the very *Rara Avis* you have all this while been Wrangling about, for I never found it any where but in a Quart of good *Claret*.

Blunt. Were we to go along with you, I believe you would have ſome difficulty to be as good as your Word; for I can tell you, ever ſince the *Devil* has found the way into the *Vintners* Cellars, and

and has Poyſon'd their *Clarets* with *Arſnick*, and their *Whitewines* with *Brimſtone*, *Honeſty* has taken Pet, and flown out of their Houſes.

Trick. I don't pretend to any more Honeſty than the reſt of my Neighbours; but, however, when I hear my Profeſſion ſo ſeverely attack'd, as it has been by Mr. *Blunt*, I think my ſelf oblig'd to ſay ſomething in defence of us that Live by it.——But I wonder a Gentleman that knows ſo little of the matter, ſhould undertake to Revile that which he does not underſtand. Pray, Sir, what is *Law?*

Blunt. 'Tis a *Hedge-Hog*, rowl'd up in his own Briſtles; and he that offers to Touch it, unleſs he be Bred to it, may be aſſur'd to Prick his Fingers.

Guzzle. Ha, ha, ha! I'll Swear a very Notable Compariſon.

Trick. Sir, there is nothing in it; I find he has no Notion of the matter.

Blunt. To prove you are a little miſtaken, I ſhall give you my real Sentiments, which are, That the *Laws* are the Articles of the General Compact of any *Body-Politick*, made by the Conſent of the whole to Secure every Man in his Property, and Eſtabliſh'd as the Ordinary means by which any Injur'd Perſon ſhould come at ſpeedy Redreſs, without any Partiality: But ever ſince *Aſtræa* has been flown to Heaven, to Favour the *Rich* and Puniſh the *Poor*, has been the ſtanding Rule of all *Political Juſtice*.

Guzzle. And ſo, I believe, it ever was, and ever will be. According to the Old Proverb, *The Weakeſt muſt go to the Wall.*

Trick. But, pray, wherein are we *Attorneys* to blame? The Accuſation does not lie againſt us?

Blunt. I'll tell you what are great Faults in the beſt of you Practicers.——To aſſiſt the *Rich* and *Powerful* againſt the *Poor* and *Innocent*. To knowingly defend a *Knave* in an Unjuſt Cauſe againſt an Injur'd *Adverſary*. To prolong the Regular Courſe of *Juſtice* for the ſake of your own *Intereſt*. To gratifie the Revenge of one Man to the Ruin of another. where the Cauſe of Action is only Frivilous and Vexatious. In theſe, and many other Enormities, you often make your ſelves the troubleſome *Agents* and *Incendaries*, purely for the ſake of being well Paid for your Labour, as if your Profeſſion was a ſufficient Plea againſt the Laws of *God*, and all Moral *Juſtice* and *Humanity*

Trick. The Merits of a *Cauſe* is the Buſineſs of the *Court*, and not of an *Attorney* to look into.—— I'll allow, we are apt to Act for any Body that will Employ us, and Pay us well, without any regard to the Honeſty of the Cauſe.——Do not the Gentlemen of the *Robe* do the ſame thing?

Blunt. I hope there are but few, but whom, in ſuch Caſes, will conſider the Honour of their Profeſſion. I have known many of them very Learn'd and Worthy Gentlemen, tho', I confeſs, I once heard a Great Man of that Honourable Fraternity, degenerate ſo far from all *Good Breeding* and *Humanity*, as to uſe a Gentleman, under a Trivial Miſdemeanor, with an unbecoming Severity; aggravating his Offence with ſuch palpable Untruths, as if they were rather the Effect of his own *Malice*, than the Zeal he might have for his own *Duty:* But I would have all ſuch Gentlemen remember, that tho' *Poſt*, *Figure*, and *Audacity* may carry a Man Gracefully thro' a Falſe and Spiteful Aggravation, yet neither his *Grandure* or his *Eloquence* will hold him Guiltleſs before the Juſt God, or an *Honeſt* Man; for no Authority can give a Real Sanction to a *Malicious Falſity*; tho' the better to caſt a Miſt before the Eyes of the Publick, they may Countenance the Evil.

Trick. You ſpeak of things done in the Days of Yore; God be thanked we Live in a Reign wherein *Juſtice* is truly adminiſter'd.

Blunt. I would not have you think that I Charge what I have Reported upon any Perſon now in Authority.

Guzzle. A Pox of this tedious Controverſie; will you away to the *Three-Tuns* and take a Flaſk, or no.

Blunt. } With all our Hearts.
Trick. }

Guzzle. Then let's be going; a good thing can never be begun too early. [*Exeunt.*]

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